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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, National Reconnaissance Office

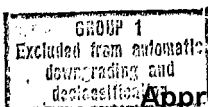
SUBJECT: Possible Relocation of IDEALIST Project to
Davis Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona

REFERENCE: [REDACTED] same subject, dated 14 March 1967

1. As a supplement to [REDACTED] we are submitting herewith additional information concerning the possible relocation of the IDEALIST project. The referent study listed a number of reasons why the relocation of the IDEALIST Detachment would not be feasible. The purpose of this memorandum is to list those advantages which might accrue from such a move if it should occur. This assumes the expenditure of [REDACTED] to build the additional facilities at Davis Monthan and to effect the transfer of the Detachment. The assumptions for this supplement are the same as for the referent study.

2. Perhaps the most obvious area of potential savings would be the closure of the North Base at Edwards Air Force Base. Since it would take about two years to effect the move, the testing of the U-2R should be substantially completed and the closure of North Base could be considered. The projected savings would have to be offset by the fact that the support costs at Davis Monthan would be simultaneously increased. We have no way of computing the cost of the direct and indirect support rendered to the Detachment by the Air Force, but we believe that they would be substantially the same at either base. In effect, therefore, the savings which would accrue from the closure would be in such limited areas as runway and taxiway maintenance, fire protection, etc. These expenses at Davis Monthan will exist whether the Detachment is there or not. We cannot provide a cost figure for this type of maintenance, but believe it would be relatively small.

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3. Another possibility of savings would be in those areas where the two U-2 fleets could use joint facilities. Both are now serviced by the Warner-Robbins Depot and to a degree they could probably share common maintenance and supply facilities at Davis Monthan. It would not be possible to completely integrate the maintenance and supply functions. It would still be necessary to maintain separate control of the sterile sensors and other sensitive materiel used in the IDEALIST program. Further, the authorization documentation for IDEALIST is not compatible with standard Air Force supply documentation. There could be some personnel reductions, and savings in the warehouse space itself. Identification of savings would be dependent on the degree to which consolidations could be effected.

4. The relocation of the IDEALIST unit could result in some savings in the communications facilities since the IDEALIST communications staff could then relieve the Air Force of the requirement to provide [REDACTED] communications to the SAC component. We doubt that this would result in the reduction of USAF personnel assigned to the Air Force commo unit, but it would reduce the workload. The IDEALIST commo unit is responsible for deployment communications support as well as base support, and we do not believe that relocation would affect its mission or strength.

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5. If the two units were located at the same base, it would be possible for them to exchange equipment in emergencies. This is a minimal consideration at this time, although there have been some exchanges of cameras, navigation aids, etc. Liaison and the exchange of ideas would also be easier.

6. Another area of joint usage would be fuel storage. However, it would still be necessary to maintain separate systems to deliver fuel from the dump to the aircraft because the quality controls for the covert operations are somewhat more rigid than for normal operations. This could, of course, be overcome if SAC adopted the IDEALIST quality control procedures.

7. Certain areas which would normally suggest improved efficiency through joint use (motor pools, etc.) have not been

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included because such arrangements have already been put into effect at Edwards.

8. The items listed above include only those which we believe would result in tangible net savings. They do not include support items which would merely be transferred from one base to the other. It is our considered opinion that the advantages above are far outweighed by other factors listed in the referent memorandum and that a relocation of the Detachment would not be in the best interests of the Government. On the basis of at least a five year amortization, it is clear that the cost of a move would be significantly greater than the continuation of the present arrangement.

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Comptroller
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